



## Slowing global warming: Benefits for patients and the planet

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### Abstract:

Global warming will cause significant harm to the health of persons and their communities by compromising food and water supplies; increasing risks of morbidity and mortality from infectious diseases and heat stress; changing social determinants of health resulting from extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and expanding flood plains; and worsening air quality, resulting in additional morbidity and mortality from respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Vulnerable populations such as children, older persons, persons living at or below the poverty level, and minorities will be affected earliest and greatest, but everyone likely will be affected at some point. Family physicians can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, stabilize the climate, and reduce the risks of climate change while also directly improving the health of their patients. Health interventions that have a beneficial effect on climate change include encouraging patients to reduce the amount of red meat in their diets and to replace some vehicular transportation with walking or bicycling. Patients are more likely to make such lifestyle changes if their physician asks them to and leads by example. Medical offices and hospitals can become more energy efficient by recycling, purchasing wind-generated electricity, and turning off appliances, computers, and lights when not in use. Moreover, physicians can play an important role in improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by advocating for enforcement of existing air quality regulations and working with local and national policy makers to further improve air quality standards, thereby improving the health of their patients and slowing global climate change.

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### Resource Description

#### Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

#### Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

#### Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Global or Unspecified

## **Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):**

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

A focus of content

## **Health Impact:**

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

## **Intervention:**

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

## **Medical Community Engagement:**

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

## **Mitigation/Adaptation:**

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Mitigation

## **Population of Concern:** A focus of content

## **Resource Type:**

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion, Review

## **Timescale:**

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified